



**READING BOARD OF EDUCATION
BOARD REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 22, 2025**

The Board of Education of the Reading Community City School District met in Regular Session at Reading Community City School, 810 East Columbia Avenue on January 22, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by President Beth Wernery at 5:33 p.m.

Roll Call: Present Four: Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery
Absent: Alycia Bemmes

Motion to excuse Ms. Alycia Bemmes from the meeting made by Ms. Wernery and seconded by Amy Thamann.

Roll Call: Ayes Four: Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery
Absent: Alycia Bemmes
Nays: None
The President declared the motion carried

In Attendance:

Dr. Damon Davis, Mrs. Jennifer Burke, Mr. Mark Edwards, Ms. Rebecca Johnson, Ms. Gina Sansone, Mr. Michael Howton.

Motion 33-25 Approve Agenda

It was moved by Crystal Menner, seconded by Jim Perdue to approve the agenda as written.

Roll Call: Ayes Four: Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery
Absent: Alycia Bemmes
Nays: None
The President declared the motion carried.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

None.

PRESENTATIONS

Student Character Awards – 2nd Quarter

Character Awards were given to students across all grade levels who exemplify the "Blue Devil Way" through their kindness, responsibility, and leadership. These students were recognized for their positive attitudes, willingness to help others, and ability to serve as role models in their classrooms and beyond. From kindergarteners stepping into school life with kindness and maturity to seniors demonstrating perseverance and hard work, these awards celebrate the heart and spirit of Reading Schools.



First Name	Last Name
Noelani	Awalt
Chase	Berry
Ireland	Vaughn
Milo	Syravong
Alan	Hoffman
Ben	Flege
Lilie	Reed
Carter	Reed
Bayleigh	Thompson
Eli	Vance
De'Ron	Spicer
Aaron	Pruden
Luke	Reiter
Natalie	Lacewell
Callie	Gatio
Owen	Brockman
Waylon	Overbeck
Brielle	Marshall
Klara	Elswick
Beckett	Haddix
Ryann	McCormick
Tucker	Heskamp
Piper	Schmidt
Bocar	Diallo
Camden	Rosenthal
Haley	Androne

Blue Devil Hero Award

The Board was proud to recognize Ms. Emily Sewall, 5th-8th Grade School Counselor, as the January Blue Devil Hero Award recipient. Ms. Sewall's dedication to her students and colleagues exemplifies what it means to be a Blue Devil Hero.

"Ms. Sewall has jumped right into Reading with an amazing positive attitude and heart for students. She is always creating new ideas and uses her love of crafts in groups with students. She is a strong advocate for her students and families and cares deeply for their academic success as well as personal growth and social-emotional health. It has been a joy to get to know Emily and work with her on a team. Thankful to have her here!"

Congratulations to Ms. Sewall on this well-deserved recognition! Thank you for your unwavering commitment to excellence and for making a lasting impact on our students and staff.

Board of Education Recognition

School Board Members embody local citizen leadership and decision-making in education. They dedicate countless hours and energy to ensure our schools provide the best education for our community's children. During School Board Recognition Month this January, we express our gratitude for their commitment and service.

These elected leaders make decisions that shape our children's education, from what they learn to the facilities where they learn. Representing the community, they attend meetings, conferences, and discussions to stay informed and address the unique needs of our schools.



Our school board is part of more than 600 boards across Ohio, ensuring local control of public education. Their work reflects the values and priorities of our community, impacting every aspect of our schools with the support of educational professionals.

Too often, their dedication goes unrecognized. This evening we take a moment to thank these individuals for their service and for caring deeply about the education of our children.

We proudly salute the members of the Reading Community City School District Board of Education for their vision and leadership: Board members have completed the following years of service:

- Mrs. Beth Wernery, President - Seven years of service
- Mrs. Alycia Bemmes, Vice-President - Seven years of service
- Mrs. Crystal Menner, Board Member - Four years of service
- Mrs. Amy Thamann, Board Member - Four years of service
- Mr. Jim Perdue, Board Member - Thirty-four years of service

Thank you for your dedication and for shaping a brighter future for our students and community!

Program of Studies Presentation – Mark Edwards, Assistant Superintendent

Assistant Superintendent Mark Edwards provided an overview of the Program of Studies, highlighting new opportunities to prepare students for college, career, and workforce success. The district is expanding its Pathway Program, helping students align coursework with future goals while introducing over 20 new course opportunities in the coming years.

Several new courses were added to support evolving career fields, including Accelerated Science (7th & 8th grade), Behavioral Health I-III, Cyber Security, Programming, and Principles of Engineering. The district also expanded its Healthcare Pathway with Intro. to Healthcare II and increased adult training opportunities through Great Oaks. Recent additions, such as Art History and Business courses, remain key offerings, along with internships and work-study programs that provide real-world learning experiences.

The district emphasizes leadership and communication skills by requiring formal presentations in every high school course and expanding communication-focused coursework. These efforts and enhanced career pathways aim to ensure that every student graduate with the skills and experiences necessary for success.

Superintendent Dr. Davis reinforced that these curriculum improvements align with the district's mission to provide engaging opportunities and equip students for the future.

RJSH Update – Mr. Michael Howton

Principal Michael Howton shared updates on key initiatives at Reading Junior-Senior High School (RJSH), emphasizing student engagement, academic growth, and school culture. The school continues to expand career pathways with new electives in STEM, Business, and Healthcare, ensuring students have access to relevant coursework. Additionally, formal presentation skills are now integrated into every class to build confidence in public speaking and critical thinking.

RJSH has implemented Teacher Action Teams focusing on the school environment, student leadership, and PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports) to enhance student leadership and school culture. A student and a parent advisory group will also launch in the second semester, giving parents and students a voice in school decisions.



Efforts to strengthen student connections include counselor-led learning sessions that promote engagement and positive relationships with staff. Research shows that students who feel connected perform better academically, making this a top priority.

RJSH remains committed to creating a supportive, high-quality learning environment where students develop the skills and confidence needed for future success.

BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES

Building & Grounds – Crystal Menner – Next meeting April 16, 2025 at 4:30 p.m. in the Media Center.

Finance Committee – Jim Perdue – Next meeting May 21, 2025 at 4:30 p.m. in the Media Center.

Policy – Beth Wernery – Next meeting April 16, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. in the Board of Education Office.

Great Oaks Board & Student Highlights -

Mr. Perdue provided Great Oaks Board Highlights to each board member. RCCSD student Maxwell Kroeger passed the Ohio Department of Public Safety Firefighter II Certification.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Athletic Pay-to-Play Fees

The Board discussed a proposed increase in athletic pay-to-play fees, which have remained unchanged since 2010. Rising costs in transportation, officiating, and coaching contracts have led to the recommendation of increasing the fee from \$75 per athlete to \$100, with a family cap of \$400. Additionally, students participating in three sports would only be required to pay for two, with the third sport being free. The Board acknowledged the importance of keeping athletics accessible while ensuring program sustainability and will continue reviewing the financial impact before finalizing the decision. No action was taken by the Board. If the Board approves these fee increases, they will be effective in the 2025-2026 school year.

Athletic Season Passes

The Board discussed adjustments to athletic pass pricing due to increased expenses outpacing revenue. Also, the Cincinnati Hills League (CHL) is requiring an increase in athletic tickets varsity tickets will increase from \$7 to \$10 next year, and JV ticket prices will increase from \$5 to \$7. Proposed changes include raising family annual passes from \$175 to \$200, adding a single-season family pass for \$110, and increasing the adult yearly pass from \$90 to \$105. A new single-season adult pass (\$60) option was also introduced. Student passes remain \$50 annually, with the addition of a single-season student pass at \$30. The Board aims to balance affordability for families while covering operational costs. The Board took no action.

Preschool Tuition Fees

The Board approved a proposal to adjust SY25/26 preschool tuition rates due to rising instructional and operational costs, including teacher salaries, aides, special education services, and classroom supplies. Preschool tuition has not been increased since 2022. The full-day tuition was recommended to increase from \$5,000 to \$5,600 per year (\$550/month + \$100 deposit), while the half-day program remained the same at \$2,500 per year (\$245/month + \$50 deposit). The Board discussed how this change aligns with past tuition trends and the need to maintain quality early childhood education while ensuring financial sustainability.



DISTRICT REPORT

2024-2025 1st Half Bullying Report

Dr. Davis presented the district's first-half bullying report, outlining reported and confirmed incidents in each school. The Elementary School had three reported cases, none confirmed, while RJSH had two reported cases, none confirmed.

Dr. Davis defined bullying and explained that it is when a person or group repeatedly hurts, threatens, or mistreats another person on purpose. Bullying can happen in different ways, including verbal bullying (name-calling, teasing), physical bullying (hitting, pushing), social bullying (spreading rumors, leaving someone out), and cyberbullying (hurtful messages or posts online). For something to be considered bullying, it must be intentional, happen more than once, and cause harm to the person being targeted.

Schools take bullying very seriously because it can make students feel unsafe, anxious, or afraid to come to school. When an incident is reported, staff investigate to determine if it meets the definition of bullying. If it does, the school then takes action, including counseling, discipline, or support for the victim and the person doing the bullying. The goal is to stop bullying and teach students how to treat others with kindness and respect. If you or someone you know is being bullied, it's important to tell a teacher, counselor, or trusted adult so they can help. Everyone deserves to feel safe and supported at school. It is also important to note that even if something doesn't fit the definition of bullying the district can still take disciplinary action to stop the behavior.

January/February Professional Development

The district remains committed to ongoing staff development, with recent and upcoming professional learning opportunities. The January 17 in-service focused on formative instructional practices, data-driven decision-making, and classroom engagement strategies. Looking ahead, the February 14 collaborative PD day will follow a conference-style format where RJSH and RES teachers will engage in workshops tailored to teacher expertise and instructional needs. The district's goal is to provide meaningful, teacher-led professional development that enhances instructional effectiveness and student learning.

Business Appreciation Breakfast

The district is preparing for its second annual Business Appreciation Breakfast on February 20, 2025, from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. in the main gymnasium. This event recognizes the vital role of local businesses in supporting Reading students and schools. Over 80 business leaders have RSVP'd to attend the breakfast to connect with district leaders, learn about innovative school programs, and explore partnership opportunities. Last year's first event welcomed 30 business representatives.

This initiative, led by Assistant Superintendent Mark Edwards and Career Based Learning Coordinator Todd Schilling, reinforces the district's commitment to building strong community-business relationships that benefit students through mentorships, internships, and real-world learning experiences.

Treasurer's Recommendations

Motion 34-25 Approve Minutes – December 18, 2024 Regular Session and January 8, 2025 Organization and Work Session Meetings.* (waived the reading of the minutes)

It was moved by Crystal Menner, seconded by Amy Thamann to approve December 18, 2024 Regular Session Meeting Minutes and January 8, 2025 Organization and Work Session Meeting Minutes.

Roll Call: Ayes Four: Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery

Absent: Alycia Bemmes

Nayes: None

The President declared the motion carried.



Motion 35-25 Approve Financial Reports / Bank Reconciliation / Investments for December 2024

It was moved by Amy Thamann, seconded by Crystal Menner to approve the Financial Reports/Bank Reconciliation / Investments for December 2024.

Roll Call: Ayes Four: Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery
Absent: Alycia Bemmes
Nayes: None
The President declared the motion carried.

Motion 36-25 Approve the Following Donations:

It was moved by Amy Thamann, seconded by Crystal Menner to approve the following donations.

Donation From	Donation To	Amount
BoChic Bridal Boutique	Student Lunch Acct.	\$30.00
Reading Chamber	Student Needs	\$500.00
Cincysips	Principal's Fund (Elem)	\$50.00
Abby Morgan	Athletic Special Projects	\$1,000.00

Roll Call: Ayes Four: Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery
Absent: Alycia Bemmes
Nayes: None
The President declared the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Motion 37-25 Approve the Following Staff Retirements:

It was moved by Amy Thamann, seconded by Crystal Menner to approve the following Staff retirements at the end of the SY24/25 year.

Name of Staff	Position	Effective Date
Rebecca Johnson	Director of Student Services	Resigned for retirement purposes effective June 30, 2025 Received 1//14/2025
Cindy Taylor	8th Grade Science	Resigned for retirement purposes at the end of 2024-25 school year Received 1/13/2025

Roll Call: Ayes Four: Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery
Absent: Alycia Bemmes
Nayes: None
The President declared the motion carried.

Motion 38.25 Approve the Following Non-Staff for the 2024-25 School Year:

It was moved by Crystal Menner, seconded by Amy Thamann to approve the following Non-Staff Substitute for 2024-2025 School Year.

Name of Staff	Position	Recommended Salary	Vendor
Zarina Chughtai	RJSH Building Substitute	\$120.00/day1/6/2025-5/30/2025	Sub Solutions

Roll Call: Ayes Four: Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery
Absent: Alycia Bemmes
Nayes: None
The President declared the motion carried.



Motion 39-25 Approve the Following Non-Staff Training on January 17, 2025:

It was moved by Jim Perdue, seconded by Amy Thamann to approve the following Non-Staff Training on January 17, 2025.

Name of Staff	Position
Jacqueline Smith	Science of Reading PD (Up to 8 hours)
Dana Simon	Science of Reading PD (Up to 8 hours)
Brittany Vandy	Science of Reading PD (Up to 8 hours)
Tiffany Berry	ParaProfessional (Up to 4 hours)
Samantha Mayne	ParaProfessional (Up to 4 hours)
Amanda McQueen	ParaProfessional (Up to 4 hours)
Megan Rogers	ParaProfessional (Up to 4 hours)

Roll Call: Ayes Four: Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery

Absent: Alycia Bemmes

Nayes: None

The President declared the motion carried.

Motion 40-25 Approve the Following Staff/Non-Staff for After School Clubs 2/1/25-5/30/25:

It was moved by Amy Thamann, seconded by Crystal Menner to approve the following Staff/Non-Staff for After School Clubs from 2/1/25-5/30/25 and will be paid at a rate of \$30.00/hour.

Club	Sponsor(s)	Total Hours
Board Games and Baking	Misty Cook	18
Best Buddies	Kristin Pong	20
RJSH Crafts	Kari Kelly	38
Formal Musical	Lanie Sorge	25
RJSH Art Club	Jeremy Newell Matthew Nichols	60
Reading Readers Book Club	Kayla Crooks	23
Garden/Nature Club	Randi Miller Holly Waltz	45
RES Math Games	Lisa Kloesz	16
Collecting Club	Luke Cripe Jeremy Newell	14

Roll Call: Ayes Four: Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery

Absent: Alycia Bemmes

Nayes: None

The President declared the motion carried.

Motion 41.25 Approve the Following Calamity Days/Schedule Adjustments:

It was moved by Jim Perdue, seconded by Amy Thamann to approve the following Calamity Days / Delay adjustments to the schedule.

Date	Calamity Day/Reason
Monday, January 6, 2025	Closed Full Day - Inclement Weather Conditions
Tuesday, January 7, 2025	Closed Full Day - Inclement Weather Conditions
Wednesday, January 8, 2025	2 Hour Delay - Snow Removal
Friday, January 10, 2025	Closed Full Day - Inclement Weather Conditions
Wednesday, January 22, 2025	Closed Full Day - Inclement Weather Conditions



Roll Call: Ayes Four: Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery
Absent: Alycia Bemmes
Nayes: None
The President declared the motion carried.

Motion 42-25 Approve the Preschool Tuition for the 2025-2026 School Year as follows:

It was moved by Amy Thamann, seconded by Crystal Menner to approve the Preschool Tuition for the 2025-2026 School Year.

PreK Program	Tuition
Half Day Program	\$2,500/Year
Full Day Program	\$5,600/Year

Roll Call: Ayes Four: Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery
Absent: Alycia Bemmes
Nayes: None
The President declared the motion carried.

Motion 43-25 Approve the 2024-2025 1st Half Bullying Report as follows:

It was moved by Jim Perdue, seconded by Crystal Menner to approve the 2024-2025 1st Half Bullying Report. .

Building	Reported Incidents	Confirmed Incidents
Elementary	3	0
RJSH	2	0

Roll Call: Ayes Four: Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery
Absent: Alycia Bemmes
Nayes: None
The President declared the motion carried.

Motion 44-25 Approve the Overnight Field Trip for Wrestling Tournament:

It was moved by Crystal Menner, seconded by Amy Thamann to approve the Overnight Wrestling Tournament from January 24th, 2025-Janary 25th, 2025 at Eaton High School.

Roll Call: Ayes Four: Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery
Absent: Alycia Bemmes
Nayes: None
The President declared the motion carried.

Motion 45-25 Adjournment

It was moved by Jim Perdue, seconded by Crystal Menner to adjourn at 7:54 p.m.

Roll Call: Ayes Four: Crystal Menner, Jim Perdue, Amy Thamann, Beth Wernery
Absent: Alycia Bemmes
Nayes: None
The President declared the motion carried.

President, Reading Board of Education

Attest: Treasurer, Reading Board of Education